



# Bridging Generations Newsletter



FALL 2023 EDITION

## PROGRAM UPDATE

Our Family Match Program and School Grandparent Programs are both open. We are accepting new program volunteers and families and trying to find matches for existing waiting volunteers and families.

Additionally, our Letters To Seniors Program remains busy. We have begun collecting kind holiday messages to be distributed in December to seniors living in care homes. We thank all of our volunteers who have made this program such a success.

We hope everyone had a wonderful Grandparents Day on September 10th. We thank the City of Burnaby for proclaiming the date and for hanging Volunteer Grandparents' banner on the City Overpass.

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# INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## BY RACHELLE PATILLE

WE THANK ALL OF THE FAMILIES AND VOLUNTEERS FROM OUR ORGANIZATION WHO PARTICIPATED IN HER RESEARCH

### Intergenerational Program Guidelines

- Are materials accessible?
- Are any sub-populations "left out"?
- Are all participants screened in an equitable way?

1

2

- Do you have measures in place to support your participants in the time of an emergency?

3

- Do you have diverse partnerships that support program recruitment, sustainability, management, and evaluation?

4

- How can you use the support of your participants (current and past) to support the program?

5

- Do you provide guidelines, tools, or lessons learned to support intergenerational volunteer kinships through challenging aspects of the relationship?

6

- Does the program facilitate an adequate amount of consistent (weekly), -in-person informal time to be spent between participants?

7

- Do participants have the means to connect through technology to keep communication channels open during times of distance?

8

- Do activities facilitate acts of generativity that evoke reciprocal giving?

9

- Are communication channels between the program organization and participants cater to diverse communication styles?

10

- How does the program provide opportunities for older adults to form a relationship with parents of younger participants?



Want to learn more? Contact me at [rachelle\\_patille@sfu.ca](mailto:rachelle_patille@sfu.ca)



**"YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE RELATED TO BE FAMILY": AN INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM IN METRO VANCOUVER**

RACHELLE PATILLE, MA

#### RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Explore how **long-term community-based, nonfamilial intergenerational opportunities**, like the Family Match, impact the lives of **participants of all ages** as well as gain a deeper understanding of the **organizational attributes of intergenerational programming**.

#### PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

- 5 younger adults**
- 60% male
  - 40% female
  - 60% Caucasian
  - 40% Asian
  - 16-22 years old
- 4 older adults**
- 100% female
  - 75% Caucasian
  - 25% Asian
  - 75-84 years old
- 1 program provider**

#### KEY FINDINGS

1. **Flexible** and **participant-led** programming creates **choice, control, and agency** among participants
2. Participants **use boundaries** to keep unsupportive biological relationships and friendships "separate" from the volunteer grandparent-grandchild relationship to protect all relations
3. **Volunteer kinships transcend** beyond volunteer grandparent-grandchild relationships as multigenerational relationships are cultivated **expanding participants' social support networks** and family
4. **Parents act as a gatekeeper** to the volunteer grandparent-grandchild relationship and contribute to **relationship maintenance and longevity** by keeping communication channels active with the volunteer grandparents
5. **Volunteer grandparents'** expression of **generativity** contributes to their volunteer grandchildren's **personal growth, skill and character development, and decision-making**.
6. **Parental separation, family dynamics, physical distance, and the COVID-19 pandemic actively strained** the volunteer grandparent-grandchild relationship
7. **Technology** creates a **bi-directional communication** channel between volunteer grandchildren and grandchild during periods of time/or distance apart.
8. **Participants gained exposure and purposeful contact** with **different generations** where they **shared cultures and perspectives** enhancing their **acceptance of diversity** while creating and maintaining a long-term volunteer kinship.

If you are interested in receiving the full thesis, please email [rachelle\\_patille@sfu.ca](mailto:rachelle_patille@sfu.ca)

**THANK YOU TO THE**



Volunteer Grandparents would like to express our deep gratitude to the City of Burnaby for providing us with funding and always being a strong source of support for the organization and our mission. We have worked with the city once again this year to proclaim September 10th as Grandparents Day. Volunteer Grandparents is thankful for their support and shared belief in the importance of grandparents and the strength of intergenerational connections.

**JOIN OUR LETTERS TO  
SENIORS PROGRAM AND  
BUILD MEANINGFUL  
PEN-PAL  
RELATIONSHIPS!**



For more information, visit [volunteergrandparents.ca](http://volunteergrandparents.ca) or contact [info@volunteergrandparents.ca](mailto:info@volunteergrandparents.ca)



Volunteer Grandparents recognizes and commemorates the history and ongoing legacy of residential schools and the trauma experienced by so many.  
Every child matters!

# NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

## HONOURING OUR FOUNDER: MARJORIE ANDERSON

As Volunteer Grandparents celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, it is important to go back to the beginning and recognize the hard work of our founder, Marjorie Anderson. The passion and love of Marjorie Anderson set the tone for the work that we continue to this day. She strongly believed in the importance of older adults and the power of intergenerational connections.

**“How can children, without the benefit of at least one older person, grow up to feel that they belong, are part of the continuum of mankind, are part of something larger, and hence become adults responsible for part of that?”**

*- Marjorie Anderson*